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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Case No: '11 CV2917 BEN POR **Thomas Huggins** Plaintiff, **Complaint For Damages** v. **Jury Trial Demanded** KMF Ocean Vista, LLC d.b.a. Ocean Vista Apartments, Todd A. Brisco, and Todd A. Brisco & Associates Defendants.

Introduction

Thomas Huggins, (Plaintiff), through Plaintiff's attorneys, brings this action to 1. challenge the actions of KMF Ocean Vista d.b.a. Ocean Vista Apartments, LLC, Todd A. Brisco, and Todd A. Brisco & Associates, (Collectively referred to as "Defendants"), with regard to attempts by Defendants to unlawfully and abusively collect a debt allegedly owed by Plaintiff, and this conduct caused Plaintiff damages.

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San Diego, California

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- Plaintiff makes these allegations on information and belief, with the exception of those allegations that pertain to a plaintiff, or to a plaintiff's counsel, which Plaintiff alleges on personal knowledge.
 While many violations are described below with specificity, this Complaint
 - 3. While many violations are described below with specificity, this Complaint alleges violations of the statutes cited in their entirety.
 - 4. Unless otherwise stated, all the conduct engaged in by Defendants took place in California.
 - 5. Any violations by Defendants were knowing, willful, and intentional, and Defendants did not maintain procedures reasonably adapted to avoid any such violation.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 6. Jurisdiction of this Court arises pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331, 15 U.S.C. § 1692(k), and 28 U.S.C. § 1367 for supplemental state claims.
- 7. This action arises out of Defendants' violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692 et seq. ("FDCPA") and Defendant KMF Ocean Vista, LLC's violations of the Rosenthal Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, California Civil Code §§ 1788-1788.32 ("Rosenthal Act").
- 8. Because all Defendants do business within the State of California, personal jurisdiction is established.
 - 9. Venue is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391.
- 21 10. At all times relevant, all Defendants conducted business within the State of California.

PARTIES

- 24 11. Plaintiff is a natural person who resides in the City of San Diego, State of California.
- From November 2006 to June 13, 2011, Plaintiff was a member of the United
 States Marines and an active duty servicemember as defined in section 101(d)

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- (1) of Title 10, United States Code, and section 400(a)(1) California Military and Veterans Code.
- 13. Defendant Todd A. Brisco is an attorney located in the City of Anaheim, in the State of California.
- 14. Defendant Todd A. Brisco & Associates is a law firm and debt collection agency located in the City of Anaheim, in the State of California.
- 15. Defendant KMF Ocean Vista, LLC is an apartment company that owns and operates Ocean Vista apartments located in the City of Oceanside, in the State of California.
- Plaintiff is obligated or allegedly obligated to pay an apartment rental debt. 16. and is a "consumer" as that term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).
- Defendants Todd A. Brisco and Todd A. Brisco & Associates are persons who 17. use an instrumentality of interstate commerce or the mails in a business the principal purpose of which is the collection of debts, or who regularly collect or attempt to collect, directly or indirectly, debts owed or due or asserted to be owed or due another and are therefore debt collectors as that phrase is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).
- Plaintiff is a natural person from whom a debt collector sought to collect a 18. consumer debt which was due and owing or alleged to be due and owing from Plaintiff, and is a "debtor" as that term is defined by California Civil Code § 1788.2(h).
- Defendants KMF Ocean Vista, LLC, in its ordinary course of business, 19. regularly, on behalf of themselves, or others, engages in debt collection as that term is defined by California Civil Code § 1788.2(b), are therefore debt collectors as that term is defined by California Civil Code § 1788.2(c).
- This case involves money, property or their equivalent, due or owing or 20. alleged to be due or owing from a natural person by reason of a consumer

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credit transaction. As such, this action arises out of a consumer debt and "consumer credit" as those terms are defined by Cal. Civ. Code § 1788.2(f).

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

- 21. Plaintiff was on active duty orders in the United States Marines from November 2006 to June 13, 2011.
- 22. On or about December 2009, Plaintiff moved in to the Ocean Vista apartments owned and operated by Defendant KMF Ocean Vista, LLC.
- 23. On March 13, 2010, the lease ended and Plaintiff moved out of the Ocean Vista apartment.
- On September 8, 2011, Plaintiff submitted an application to another 24. apartment. During this application process, Plaintiff first learned that the Ocean Vista apartment, reported a past due collection amount on Plaintiff's credit report. As a result of the adverse credit reporting, Plaintiff's application for the apartment was denied.
- These financial obligations were primarily for personal, family or household 25. purposes and are therefore a "debt" as that term is defined by 15 U.S.C. §1692a(5).
- 26. These alleged obligations were money, property, or their equivalent, which is due or owing, or alleged to be due or owing, from a natural person to another person and are therefore a "debt" as that term is defined by California Civil Code §1788.2(d), and a "consumer debt" as that term is defined by California Civil Code §1788.2(f).
- 23 27. On or around October 17, 2011, Plaintiff received an email notice from Defense Financing, regarding a notice of garnishment. 24
- 25 28. Plaintiff informed his Major of the debt collect and wage garnishment after receiving the email. The garnishment notice indicated that Defendant Todd A. 26 27 Brisco & Associates were representing Defendant KMF Ocean Vista, LLC. Plaintiff's Major called Defendant Todd A. Brisco's office. During this 28

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- conversation, a representative from Defendant's office informed him that Plaintiff was served on March 30, 2011 at the Ocean View apartment.
- 29. Upon review of the case file in the Superior Court of California, County of San Diego, a request for entry of judgment was entered April 14, 2010. On the second page of the request from, Defendant indicated that Plaintiff was of "nonmillitary status" and not entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, when Defendants knew or should have known that was not true.²
- 30. Through this conduct, Defendants Todd A. Brisco and Todd A. Brisco & Associates used a false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of a debt. Consequently, Defendants Todd A. Brisco and Todd A. Brisco & Associates violated 15 U.S.C. §1692e and 15 §1692 e(10).
- Through this conduct, Defendants Todd A. Brisco and Todd A. Brisco & 31. Associates violated the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. app. §521.
- Defendant KMF Ocean View, LLC is vicariously liable for the acts of its 32. attorneys and therefore used an unfair or unconscionable means to collect or attempt to collect a debt. Consequently, Defendant KMF Ocean Vista, LLC violated 15 U.S.C §1692f, as well as Cal.Civ.Code §1788.17.
- On May 5, 2011³, Defendants Todd A. Brisco and Todd A. Brisco and 33. Associates, as attorneys on behalf of Defendant KMF Ocean View, LLC, obtained a default judgment against Plaintiff by the indicating that Plaintiff was of "nonmillitary status" and not entitled to the benefits of the

¹ 37-2010-00037875-CL-UD-NC, ROA #6.

²⁷ ² A copy of the request for entry of default is attached as Exhibit A.

³ ROA #14

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- Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, when Defendants knew or should known that was not true.⁴
- 34. Through this conduct, Defendants Todd A. Brisco and Todd A. Brisco & Associates used a false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of a debt. Consequently, Defendant violated 15 U.S.C. §1692e and 15 §1692 e(10).
- 35. Through this conduct, Defendants Todd A. Brisco and Todd A. Brisco & Associates violated the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. app. §521.
- 36. Through this conduct, Defendants Todd A. Brisco and Todd A. Brisco & Associates used an unfair or unconscionable means to collect or attempt to collect a debt. Consequently, Defendants violated 15 U.S.C §1692f.
- 37. Defendant KMF Ocean View, LLC is vicariously liable for the acts of its attorneys and therefore used a false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of a debt. Consequently, Defendant KMF Ocean Vista, LLC violated 15 U.S.C. §1692e and 15 §1692 e(10), as well as Cal.Civ.Code §1788.17.
- 38. Defendant KMF Ocean View, LLC is vicariously liable for the acts of its attorneys and therefore used an unfair or unconscionable means to collect or attempt to collect a debt. Consequently, Defendant KMF Ocean Vista, LLC violated 15 U.S.C §1692f, as well as Cal.Civ.Code §1788.17.

⁴ A copy of the request for entry of default is attached as Exhibit A.

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COUNT I

FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT (FDCPA)

15 U.S.C. §§ 1692 ET SEQ.

AS TO ALL DEFENDANTS

- Plaintiff repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference, all other 39. paragraphs.
- 40. The foregoing acts and omissions constitute numerous and multiple violations of the FDCPA, including but not limited to each and every one of the abovecited provisions of the FDCPA, 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et seq.
- As a result of each and every violation of the FDCPA, Plaintiff is entitled to 41. any actual damages pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1); statutory damages in an amount up to \$1,000.00 pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(A); and, reasonable attorney's fees and costs pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(3) from each and every defendant, jointly and severally.

COUNT II

ROSENTHAL FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT (ROSENTHAL ACT) CAL. CIV. CODE §§ 1788-1788.32

AS TO DEFENDANTS KMF OCEAN VISTA ONLY.

- Plaintiff repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference, all other 42. paragraphs.
- 43. The foregoing acts and omissions constitute numerous and multiple violations of the Rosenthal Act, including but not limited to each and every one of the above-cited provisions of the Rosenthal Act, Cal. Civ. Code §§ 1788-1788.32
- 44. As a result of each and every violation of the Rosenthal Act, Plaintiff is entitled to any actual damages pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code § 1788.30(a); statutory damages for a knowing or willful violation in the amount up to \$1,000.00 pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code § 1788.30(b); and reasonable attorney's

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fees and costs pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code § 1788.30(c) from each and every defendant, jointly and severally. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays that judgment be entered against Defendant, and Plaintiff be awarded damages from Defendant, as follows:

- An award of actual damages pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1);
- An award of statutory damages of \$1,000.00 pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(A);
- An award of costs of litigation and reasonable attorney's fees, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(3);
- An award of actual damages pursuant to California Civil Code § 1788.30(a);
- An award of statutory damages of \$1,000.00 pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code § 1788.30(b);
- An award of costs of litigation and reasonable attorney's fees, pursuant to Cal. Civ. Code § 1788.30(c).
- Pursuant to the seventh amendment to the Constitution of the United States of 45. America, Plaintiff is entitled to, and demands, a trial by jury.

Respectfully submitted,

Hyde & Swigart

Date: 12/14/2011 By:s/Joshua B. Swigart Joshua B. Swigart Attorneys for Plaintiff

Case 3:11-cv-02917-BEN-DHB Document 1 Filed 12/14/11 PageID.9 Page 9 of 10 CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS Thomas Huggins (b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff San Diego (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES) (c) Attorney's (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number) Hyde & Swigart			DEFENDANTS KMF Ocean Vista, LLC d.b.a. Ocean Vista Apartments, Todd A. Brisco, and Todd A. Brisco & Associates County of Residence of First Listed Defendant San Diego (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY) NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE LAND INVOLVED. Attorneys (If Known) '11 CV2917 BEN POR								
						•	South Suite 301, San Diego, CA 9210	08 #		-	
							DICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)	III. CI		RINCIPAL PARTIES	(Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff
						☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)			TF DEF 1 □ 1 Incorporated <i>or</i> Pr of Business In Thi	
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant	☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)	Citizer	n of Another State	2							
W. WATURE OF SUI	TD.		n or Subject of a Grign Country	3 🗖 3 Foreign Nation	□ 6 □ 6						
CONTRACT	T (Place an "X" in One Box Only) TORTS	FO	RFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES						
☐ 110 Insurance ☐ 120 Marine ☐ 130 Miller Act ☐ 140 Negotiable Instrument ☐ 150 Recovery of Overpayment	Slander 368 Asbestos Persona 308 Federal Employers' Injury Product Liability PERSONAL PROPER 340 Marine Product Liability 370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending 350 Motor Vehicle 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability 385 Property Damage 385 Property Damage	- 620 625 625 630 640 650 660 67	Agriculture Other Food & Drug Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 Liquor Laws R.R. & Truck Airline Regs. Occupational Safety/Health Other LABOR Fair Labor Standards Act Labor/Mgmt. Relations Dabor/Mgmt.Reporting & Disclosure Act Other Labor Litigation Empl. Ret. Inc. Security Act IMMIGRATION Naturalization Application Habeas Corpus - Alien Detainee Other Immigration Actions	□ 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 □ 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 PROPERTY RIGHTS □ 820 Copyrights □ 830 Patent □ 840 Trademark SOCIAL SECURITY □ 861 HIA (1395ff) □ 862 Black Lung (923) □ 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) □ 864 SSID Title XVI □ 865 RSI (405(g)) FEDERAL TAX SUITS □ 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) □ 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	400 State Reapportionment 410 Antitrust 430 Banks and Banking 450 Commerce 460 Deportation 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations 480 Consumer Credit 490 Cable/Sat TV 810 Selective Service 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange 875 Customer Challenge 12 USC 3410 890 Other Statutory Actions 891 Agricultural Acts 892 Economic Stabilization Act 893 Environmental Matters 894 Energy Allocation Act 895 Freedom of Information Act 900Appeal of Fee Determination Under Equal Access to Justice 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes						
▼1 Original □ 2 R	an "X" in One Box Only) emoved from	Reope	ened another	ferred from der district fy) al statutes unless diversity):							
VI. CAUSE OF ACTI	ON 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et seq. Brief description of cause: Unfair Debt Collection Practices										
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:	CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION		EMAND \$ 00	CHECK YES only JURY DEMAND	if demanded in complaint:						
VIII. RELATED CAS IF ANY	SE(S) (See instructions): JUDGE			DOCKET NUMBER							
DATE 12/14/2011	signature of at s/Joshua B. Sv		OF RECORD								
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY RECEIPT #	AMOUNT APPLYING IFP		JUDGE	MAG. JU	DGE						

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET FORM JS 44

Authority For Civil Cover Sheet

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and service of pleading or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. The attorney filing a case should complete the form as follows:

- I. (a) Plaintiffs-Defendants. Enter names (last, first, middle initial) of plaintiff and defendant. If the plaintiff or defendant is a government agency, use only the full name or standard abbreviations. If the plaintiff or defendant is an official within a government agency, identify first the agency and then the official, giving both name and title.
- (b) County of Residence. For each civil case filed, except U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county where the first listed plaintiff resides at the time of filing. In U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county in which the first listed defendant resides at the time of filing. (NOTE: In land condemnation cases, the county of residence of the "defendant" is the location of the tract of land involved.)
- (c) Attorneys. Enter the firm name, address, telephone number, and attorney of record. If there are several attorneys, list them on an attachment, noting in this section "(see attachment)".
- II. Jurisdiction. The basis of jurisdiction is set forth under Rule 8(a), F.R.C.P., which requires that jurisdictions be shown in pleadings. Place an "X" in one of the boxes. If there is more than one basis of jurisdiction, precedence is given in the order shown below.

United States plaintiff. (1) Jurisdiction based on 28 U.S.C. 1345 and 1348. Suits by agencies and officers of the United States are included here.

United States defendant. (2) When the plaintiff is suing the United States, its officers or agencies, place an "X" in this box.

Federal question. (3) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1331, where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution of the United States, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States. In cases where the U.S. is a party, the U.S. plaintiff or defendant code takes precedence, and box 1 or 2 should be marked.

Diversity of citizenship. (4) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1332, where parties are citizens of different states. When Box 4 is checked, the citizenship of the different parties must be checked. (See Section III below; federal question actions take precedence over diversity cases.)

- III. Residence (citizenship) of Principal Parties. This section of the JS 44 is to be completed if diversity of citizenship was indicated above. Mark this section for each principal party.
- IV. Nature of Suit. Place an "X" in the appropriate box. If the nature of suit cannot be determined, be sure the cause of action, in Section VI below, is sufficient to enable the deputy clerk or the statistical clerks in the Administrative Office to determine the nature of suit. If the cause fits more than one nature of suit, select the most definitive.
- V. Origin. Place an "X" in one of the seven boxes.

Original Proceedings. (1) Cases which originate in the United States district courts.

Removed from State Court. (2) Proceedings initiated in state courts may be removed to the district courts under Title 28 U.S.C., Section 1441. When the petition for removal is granted, check this box.

Remanded from Appellate Court. (3) Check this box for cases remanded to the district court for further action. Use the date of remand as the filing date.

Reinstated or Reopened. (4) Check this box for cases reinstated or reopened in the district court. Use the reopening date as the filing date.

Transferred from Another District. (5) For cases transferred under Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1404(a). Do not use this for within district transfers or multidistrict litigation transfers.

Multidistrict Litigation. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1407. When this box is checked, do not check (5) above.

Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment. (7) Check this box for an appeal from a magistrate judge's decision.

- VI. Cause of Action. Report the civil statute directly related to the cause of action and give a brief description of the cause. **Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity**. Example: U.S. Civil Statute: 47 USC 553
 Brief Description: Unauthorized reception of cable service
- VII. Requested in Complaint. Class Action. Place an "X" in this box if you are filing a class action under Rule 23, F.R.Cv.P.

Demand. In this space enter the dollar amount (in thousands of dollars) being demanded or indicate other demand such as a preliminary injunction.

Jury Demand. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not a jury is being demanded.

VIII. Related Cases. This section of the JS 44 is used to reference related pending cases if any. If there are related pending cases, insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judge names for such cases.

Date and Attorney Signature. Date and sign the civil cover sheet.